AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Claims

1-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently amended) A method of introducing stem cells into ~~treating~~ a patient with cell damage or disease comprising transplanting into said patient a population of at least ten cells, wherein at least 30% of said cells are multipotent mammalian stem cells, said multipotent mammalian stem cells form non-adherent clusters in culture, are self renewing, are positive for nestin and fibronectin protein, and can differentiate into both neuronal and non-neuronal cell types.

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the multipotent stem cells are from said patient ~~autologously derived~~.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the cell damage or disease is selected from a neurodegenerative disease, diabetes, heart disease, heart attack, or stroke.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the cell damage or disease is the result of traumatic injury.

36. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the multipotent stem cells are transplanted at the site of cell damage or disease.

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the patient is a human patient.

39-63. (Cancelled)

64. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein said population comprises fewer than 30 percent lineage committed cells and wherein said multipotent mammalian stem cells can differentiate into ectodermal and mesodermal cells.

65. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein said multipotent mammalian stem cells can proliferate in culture in the absence of exogenous EGF.

66. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein said multipotent mammalian stem cells are negative for vimentin and cytokeratin protein.

67. (Currently amended) The method of claim 66, wherein said multipotent mammalian stem cells are negative for p75 protein.

68. (Previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein said traumatic injury comprises fractures, lacerations, or burns.

69. (Currently amended) A method of introducing cells into ~~treating~~ a patient with cell damage or disease comprising:

(a) culturing a dissociated sample of skin epithelial tissue;

(b) isolating non-adherent cells from the culture obtained from said dissociated sample, said non-adherent cells are positive for nestin and fibronectin protein, are self renewing, and differentiate into neuronal and non-neuronal cell types; and

(c) transplanting into said patient said non-adherent cells or progeny thereof ~~in a patient with cell damage or disease~~.

70. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said progeny of said non-adherent cells comprise neuronal cells.

71. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said progeny of said non-adherent cells comprise non-neuronal cells.

72. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said progeny of said non-adherent cells are self-renewing, are positive for nestin and fibronectin protein, and can differentiate into neuronal and non-neuronal cell types.

73. (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein said cell damage or disease is the result of traumatic injury.

74. (Previously presented) The method of claim 73, wherein said traumatic injury comprises fractures, lacerations, or burns.

75. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said non-adherent cells ~~the multipotent cells~~ are from said patient ~~autologously derived~~.

76. (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein the cell damage or disease is selected from a neurodegenerative disease, diabetes, heart disease, heart attack, or stroke.

77. (Cancelled)

78. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said non-adherent cells or progeny thereof ~~the multipotent cells~~ are transplanted at the site of cell damage or disease.

79. (Cancelled)

80. (Previously presented) The method of claim 69, wherein the patient is a human patient.

81. (Cancelled)

82. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said non-adherent ~~multipotent mammalian~~ cells can proliferate in culture in the absence of exogenous EGF.

83. (Currently amended) The method of claim 69, wherein said non-adherent ~~multipotent mammalian~~ cells are negative for vimentin and cytokeratin protein.

84. (Currently amended) The method of claim 83, wherein said non-adherent ~~multipotent mammalian~~ cells are negative for p75 protein.

85. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein said multipotent stem cells are human multipotent stem cells.

86. (New) The method of claim 85, wherein said multipotent stem cells are from said patient.

87. (New) The method of claim 80, wherein said nonadherent cells are human cells.

88. (New) The method of claim 87, wherein said nonadherent cells are from said patient.